

ASST FAN

750
CHIEF OF CO
MIL-3
MIL-3

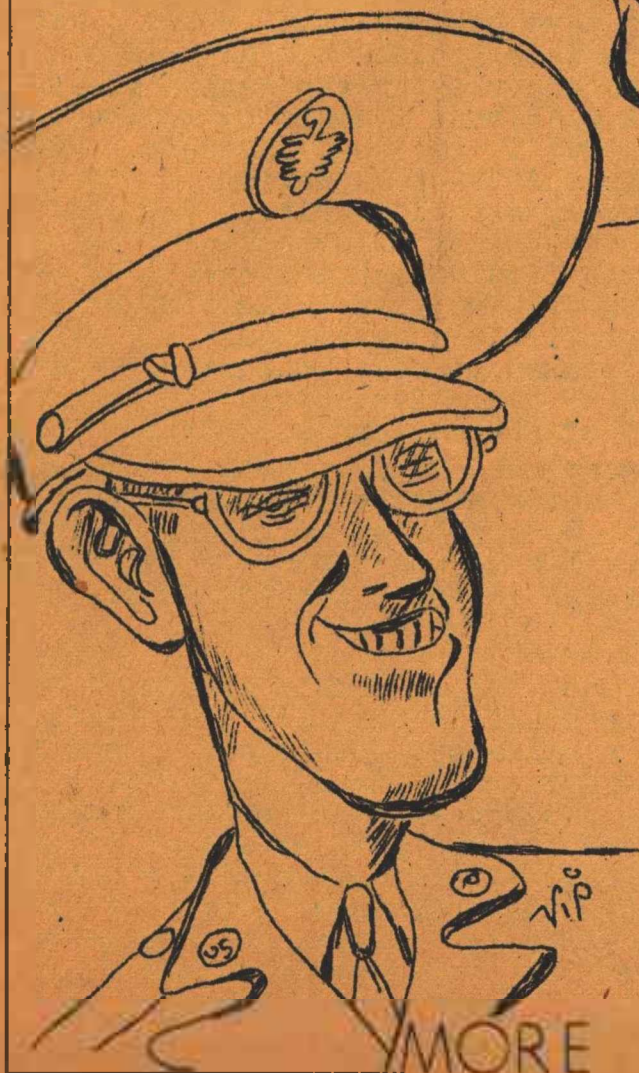
FAN





FORMER SERVIFANS

FORREST
JACKERMAN



MILTON
A.
ROTHMAN

MORE VIP CARTOONS

WHY I LIKE FANTASY

Recently at the LASFS I brought up an idea that I thought might prove of interest to nation-wide as well as, local fans. The idea was to have all the members prepare a short paper on why they are science fiction and fantasy fans. The result was far more interesting than I had visualized. Three magazines were clamoring, afterward, for the publication rights which finally rested with "FAN". Without further ado "FAN" is happy to present this special PACIFICON issue the LASFS papers on "Why I Am A Fantasy Fan".

WHY I AM A FANTASY FAN

or

WHY THE MAD SCIENTIST IS GOING TO DESTROY THE WORLD

by

GUS WILLMORTH

It is rather difficult to say why I am a fan and intend to stay that way because in actuality the reason that I am a fan now is certainly not the reason that first lured me into this predicament. Perhaps it would be best to give a graphic picture of that happening before stating reasons for being a fantasy fan at present.

Many are the articles that have been written by the various personages in fandom giving fine descriptions and high ideals for being fans that are certainly enough to stir the fanly breast as he views his cosmic attitude. I wish that I could subscribe to these reasons for being a fan. But I fear that I cannot. Being the type of person known to a psychiatrist as having introversion trends, I am a dreamer, a reformer, a social critic, (objectively, I continue to see these trends developing in myself as yet) and consequently as a child, I dreamt finding further escape in reading books, magazines and papers. In fact, anything that contained wordage, fictional wordage, I read. It is personally astonishing to me now the amount of crud I soaked up as a youngster. However, during the consumption of western, detective, adventure, fiction, et al, I gradually became sated of the more prosaic types of literature. From the tales in Argosy All-Story, I soon found that the fantastic alone were a suitable compliment to the hours of day-dreaming that I did. From there the progress is fairly obvious, from avid reading of any fantasy I happened across to the actual intensive searching for fantasy that a fan collector does. And that is the way it happened.

To explain why I am a fan now, and to make a statement of what I get out of the literature at present is slightly different. That entails, amongst other things, a self-psycho-analysis. As I first stated, I have trends of introversion--desires to reform, socially critical, wishing for progress. Science-fiction offers compensation for these desires---perhaps it even goes so far as to overcompensate, but I believe that this effect is becoming slighter with the years. Science Fiction and fandom have shaped my life. I entered fandom at an early age as have so many of us. Scientific discussion has led me into interest in science; my reform desire leads me into wishing for scientific advance. I read future stories. The sociological stories of Astounding and of the many fantasy Utopias and books of the socially minded writers have

interested me in social affairs. Fantasy led me to read mythologies for background of fantasy creatures. Mythology led to interest in people and the way that people thought to think of these many legends and creatures. My social critic trends were very interested in these subjects. I am going to take a University course in social psychology. Fandom quite early offered me a group of friends with common likes. Intelligent people, book lovers, progressives. These people played their part in the forming of me as I am. In other words, its all your fault.... These people are my friends; the people I talk to; the people I live with; the people with whom I associate and desire to continue to associate with. That is the reason that I am a fan and the reason that I intend to remain a fan. This is what I get out of fandom and out of Science Fiction.

PROPHETIC FICTION

by

DALE HART

I like Science Fiction because it is prophetic fiction. To explain: I am interested in the past, present and future, to an intense degree --- but I am interested especially in the future.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

I read Science Fiction to help me find the answer to that question.

PIE AND ICE CREAM

by

ROSS HODGKINS

Trying to analyse one's reasons for reading science fiction is like trying to determine why one likes pie and ice cream or prefers a shower to a tub. It doesn't appear to be too obvious.

To be accused of reading it as escape literature in order to avoid facing the realities of life and thus taking refuge in some "private world" arouses a feeling of resentment. I submit that the reading of any type of fiction can be classified as escapism and that this is an invalid accusation to level at those who specialize in science fiction.

Why then do I read it? Certainly not as a member of the "GOSH, WOW, BOY-O-BOY" school of thought, nor because I thrill vicariously to the exploits of Patrolman Pete vs the Vandals of the Void.

Originally, I suppose, my interest was maintained because it differed so completely from all other types of fiction. That, plus the fact that I'm convinced that people are either born with a liking for it or they're not, convertees and deserters being a comparative rarity.

Later, as my interest in scientific advancement and disgust with politics increased, a simultaneous fascination and curiosity arose in the postulations of writers regarding the developments of this and other cultures.

These and other reasons not yet crystalized account for my liking for science fiction which, in summary might be expressed as "GOSH, WOW, BOY-O-BOY".

SCIENCE FICTION FANS ARE (STUB)BORN

By

Forrest J Ackerman

IN THE FALL OF 1926 (which, by removing your shoes, you may calculate was practically 20 years ago) a lad 10 years of age went into a drugstore, now non-existent, right over here on the corner of Western & Santa Monica. His mother had sent him for a bottle of milk of magnesia, but he suffered amnesia and brot back a mag instead. This is not strictly true, but truth is said to be stranger than fiction, and I would not wish to arouse the indignation of such level-headed company as this with a true account which woud strain credulity.

Suffice it to say that on the fateful September morn when my interest in science fiction was born, a monstrous crustacean was the midwife. That old boy has been with me all my life, and I'd welcome him as an old friend, were I to encounter him in person: Paul's, quote, "fearful, lobster-like creature" which ruled the domain depicted by A. Hyatt Verrill lying "Beyond the Pole".

Now I am certain that as my eyes raced over instalment one of Dr Verrill's virile serial: read the concluding chapters of astronomer Serviss's "A Columbus of Space": puzzled over "The Purchase of the North Pole" which one M. Olchewitz had authored under the pseudonym of Zhool Valrn, often anglicized to Jules Verne; and as I shuddered at the evolutionary monstrosities running wild on Wells' "Island of Dr Moreau"; and finally read "Blasphemers' Plateau", with a disgust which still communicates itself keenly across 2 decades, tho I cannot imagine why;--I am sure as I read "Uncle Hugo's" selection for the 7th issue of Amazing Stories that I was not seeking escape from irksome home-work or hateful planto practice nor doctors' bills nor a nagging wife...no, upon reflection, to the certainty of the latter two I can, at least, attest.

I am the enemy of the agents who brand science fiction as escape literature. It may be to some; it is not to me. This I insist. I have never consciously cried out, "The world is too much with me: Keller, Campbell, Cummings, Kline or Kuttner, help me to escape to the Brave New World!" At first I must have read only for adventure; but 5 years later I was reading for ideas, particularly ideas that I could incorporate into my conduct to make myself worthy some day of the company of thinking men. So I survived the blessings of 7 sunday schools and became a convert to athelism at 15, a decision I have never regretted, even in the fox-holes of Ft. MacArthur.

They say science fiction is escape literature. Why the devil do they do this? Isn't all fiction escape? Some like to escape into the Old West or colorful historical periods of this or other lands; some, in the comfort of an easy chair, fancy the life of a gumshoe or a Sherlock Holmes; others experience vicarious sex thrillz in bed-time stories with an im-moral to them. Surely.. these readers are escaping thru the printed word? Why, then, are science fiction f a n s alone singled out as escape-goats?

Perhaps the epithet is hurled at us---or was in the past: I still momentarily forget the Atomic Bomb has made a vast difference in public reaction to sfans--perhaps we were labeled literary lush-heads because of a confusion of terms. It may be that the layman lumped science fiction and fantasy together. I am first and foremost a science fiction fan, escaping, if any where, and to borrow a phrase coined I believe by Jack Williamson, --escaping to reality. Science fiction: The time machine to Tomoro. Fantasy: The dimensional navigator to never-never land. Weird fiction? Well, I like weird fiction, too, to a certain extent, tho I have never been able to content myself that it is as laudable a facet of fiction as scientifiction. In the trinity of science fiction, fantasy & the supernatural; weird fiction I perhaps regard as the wrong angle in the otherwise righteous triangle. But this is dangerous ground and not germane to the main theme of this paper.

In closing, I think I could not do better than to quote in part from the editorial in the first science fiction magazine I ever read. By Hugo Gernsback, it is appropriately titled "Imagination & Reality". In it the recognized "father of scientifiction" stated: "When reading one of our scientifiction stories in which the author gives free rein to his imagination, providing he is a good story teller, we not infrequently find ourselves deeply thrilled. The reason is that our imagination is fired to the nth degree, and we thus obtain a real satisfaction from the time spent in reading the story. I should like to point out here how important this class of literature is to progress and to the race in general...A scientifiction story should not be taken too lightly, and should not be classed just as literature. Far from it. It actually helps in the progress of the world, if ever so little, and the fact remains that it contributes something to progress that probably no other kind of literature does." To which I add, amen. I have read scientifiction with unabated enthusiasm for 20 years because of the wealth of novel ideas I have found in it, ideas which I believe made me, paradoxically, prematurely mature mentally while keeping me mentally young and malleable of mind. Science fiction is invaluable to me for its cerebral stimulation.

Anybody wanna fight?

CONSTRUCTIVE WORK NEEDED IN FANDOM

by
ARTHUR LOUIS JOQUEL, II

My interest in science fiction dates back to my eighth birthday. I've more or less gotten into the habit by this time.

A large number of my various non-fiction interests are among those which have inspired Stf and Fantasy --- Atlantis, Satanism, Rocketry, and others and when I discovered fandom sever 1 years ago, I felt like I had "come home".

My main dissappointment in fandom is that fans in general - general, that is - are not interested in doing any real constructive work in the field that they read about. Rocketeers, Sociologists, semanticians are practically non-existent in the fan field. Even prospective airmen - for a future "Wings Over The World" - and psychologists are only too rare.

But still - when Radar reaches the moon and atomic power makes the headlines every day, it gives a pleasurable feeling to be able to say, "See - we wrote about all that years ago."

AL ASHLEY PREFERS

by
AL ASHLEY

Of that field of literature falling under the general term, "fantasy", I enjoy an occassional weird tale, and find quite a number of the "pure fantasy" stories to be greatly entertaining. But my greatest interest will always be in "Science Fiction".

I am particularly fond of stories based on "time travel", "the superman concept", and much of the "sociological science fiction". However, an "idea story" arouses in me the greatest enthusiasm.

The science fiction that I like the best must contain some thought-provoking new idea, or new twist to an old idea. If a heavy dose of science is needed to put the idea accross, I haven't the slightest objection. If the rest of the story falls a little short because of this, I'll probably never notice it.

Just provide me an adequate diet of plausible science fiction, replete with an abundance of new and novel ideas and concepts in any branch of science whatever, and I'll be utterly happy. Those who wish may have their weird's and fantasies...and welcome!

AN ARCHAEOLOGIST IN OUR MIDST

by
WALTER J. DAUGHERTY

Fantasy and weird tie for first place in my interest with stf falling third on the list. Fantasy and weird, to be especially pleasing to me, must be of a type that bases itself on fact or an organized set-up of non-fact as exemplified by the Lovecraft Mythos. Egyptology obviously interests me because of my own researches and lectures on the subject. The same may be said of pre-historic and primitive man themes as well as American Indians.

I also enjoy short fantasies with TRICK endings. In science fiction I still go for the planet expeditionery theme.

WHY I PREFER WEIRD FANTASY

by
TIGRINA

There are many reasons why I am mainly interested in the weird type of fantasy. To begin with, I had an uncanny predilection for the grotesque and the fantastic. An only child on a ranch, it was often necessary for me to invent imaginary playmates and invest trees, plants and stones with personalities of their own. I also had animal friends with whom I conversed quite as freely as though they were human beings. Therefore, when I discovered that there were such things as faerie tales and imaginative stories of that type, I was delighted, as they seemed to fit right in with the imaginative little world that I had created for myself.

My choice of literature resulted in parental disapproval for no apparent reason other than that they deemed such stuff degrading and unfit for mental consumption. This strengthened rather than lessened my craving for fantasy, for there is quite a bit of psychology in that old adage concerning forbidden fruit being the sweetest.

The youngest in my classes at school, I was frequently teased and tormented, and ignored by the older group in their parties and games. My outraged vanity found an outlet in studying witchcraft, references to which I had noticed in various imaginative stories I had read, and I devised many fantastic ways of wreaking revenge upon my antagonistic little schoolmates. Witchcraft and Black Magic opened entirely new vistas of fantasy to me, and long after I had forgotten the aforementioned childish differences, I still retained an interest in these subjects.

As I grew older and more aware of the world about me, I embraced fantasy as a means of escape. If reality were unexciting or unpleasant at times, I would journey a mile or so into town to the tiny public library, take a battered Burroughs volume from the shelves, and figuratively swing through the trees with Tarzan, or experience delicious shivers while turning the well-thumbed pages of Ambrose Bierce's "Can Such Things Be?"

My preference for weird stories was partly determined by the limited choice of books in the small country town library. All the "fantasy" there consisted mostly of ghost stories or exotic oriental and adventure tales, with the exception of a volume or so of Jules Verne.

Another reason why I tended toward the fantasy type of literature was that I had a hearty dislike for the average gushy so-called "romantic" story. The "romance" element, thank Satan, is frequently omitted in tales of a fantastic nature, or at least it does not assume major importance.

My first encounter with Weird Tales magazine was when I was about six or seven. A neighbour woman a half mile or so away had a grown son who read them. I would try to glance through them when on rare visits to the place, but was seldom able to do this. I always remembered the magazine, however, and when I became a bit older, bought the copies as regularly as I could. I would

have liked to try other magazines also--in fact I did purchase a few "Unknowns"--but fearing that the grudging permission to read Weird Tales might even be denied me should I attempt to read a greater variety of pulp literature, I contented myself with the one magazine.

Radio was also a great source of entertainment to me, and since more of the mystery and eerie type of dramas were featured in fantasy programs, this further influenced me toward the weird phase of fantasy.

Living four miles from the nearest tiny neighbourhood theatre, I missed quite a few of the motion pictures, but I searched the newspapers avidly for any mention of mystery or weird films. At one time, I kept a list of those I would like to see, although I knew I would never have a chance to view them.

Now that my interest in fantasy is unhindered, and I have unlimited access to different types of fantasy in books and magazines, I find that I am becoming more and more attracted to science fiction also. I probably would have been interested in this type of fantasy earlier in life had circumstances been a bit different. My only regret is that I did not avail myself of more scientific subjects when at school, so that I could more fully appreciate the technical aspects of some of the better science fiction tales.

IMAGINATIVE LITERATURE HAS POTENTIALITIES

by
ANDY ANDERSON

Imaginative literature has always proved of interest to me because of the enormous potentialities that that story form holds as a means of presenting the author's more off-trail ideas concerning science, economics, political affairs and other matters which intrigue me.

When one considers the pure enjoyment which these stories are capable of exuding, providing the author knows how to exude it, and providing the particular publisher, magazine or book, exudes enough of the necessary inducement to make the author exude, it is obvious what the coup de grace will be.

As for the exalted position which I hold at present as the most highly indolent member of the LASFS at the present time, well.... I first got caught up in the maelstrom of our microcosmos because of a deep-rooted interest in editing, writing and other journalistic affairs which caught hold immediately after I had realized just what the fan-mag reviews in Astonishing Stories was concerned with ---- and that took some time to realize ---, had sent for a few dozens of them (6 of which eventually came) and the very day I got the first that hit my mail box (Shangri-L'Affaires #9) and had read it through several times, I was exuding with the prospects of publishing one of my own.

MY INTEREST IN THE FANTASY FIELD

by
E Everett Evans

Having had, since early childhood, an over-whelming imagination, I have always sought out and read all of the off-trail stories I could find. Thus, when Science Fiction first founded its own peculiar magazines, I was ripe to become a regular and avid reader. For in those tales I could give my imagination free reign, aided and abetted by the vivid imaginations of the authors.

Having sampled generously the three main types of fantasy fiction -- the straight science-fiction, the fantasy and the weird, I soon found that my interest lay principally in the scientific-fiction type first, in pure fantasy second, and the weird or macabre hardly at all.

My great interest in scientific fiction comes not only from the far-flung reaches of imagination it brings to my mind, but for the mechanical problems it presents, and most especially the sociological problems. I do not have much scientific or mechanical training or knowledge to know whether or not the author's premises and applications are correct, nor do I care, from the standpoint of appreciation of the story. When I come to a mass of technical description, I read it, feeling in my mind that the author and the editor know that it is substantially correct, and therefore accepting it on faith as an interesting and integral part of the story, and let it go at that. I do my reading for the pleasure of the story and its scope, not critically for possible flaws.

The psychological and sociological problems which have been presented and worked out in many stories I have read have helped clarify in my own mind a number of the present day problems confronting the world, so that I have been enabled to build myself a rather satisfactory philosophy of life. Whether that philosophy be wrong or right I cannot know, yet I do know that it has enabled me to find life much richer and more satisfactory than before. However, I try to keep an open mind, and as new facts and data come to my attention, I seek to evaluate them as best I may, and add them to my growing philosophy.

The realm of pure fantasy is but another facet of that imagination which I possess, or which possesses me, and broadens and makes more gratifying my pleasure in thoughts of that nature. I honestly believe that my life has been richer, fuller and far more happy and satisfying because of these types of literature, than it could possibly have been had I never been able to do all the reading along these lines that I have done.

As to whether or not this is "escape" literature, and read for that reason, I am not altogether sure. It is perhaps probable that what I feel is a great sense of imagination, is only a sub-conscious desire to escape. I do know that I read for pleasure and relaxation of the body, as well as exhilaration of the mind. If that be "escape" it is all X with me ---- I'm enjoying it right along.

MY FAVORITE SCIENCE-FICTION

THE MUMMY starring Boris Karloff:

This picture, made several years ago by Universal has always been my favorite for several reasons. It was as authentic as was possible from an actual archaeological standpoint. Even the references to the gods of ancient Egypt were exact, except, of course, where the scroll of life came in. All in all the picture held your attention from beginning to end. The one scene I shall never forget however was the one where the young British Egyptologist was sitting in the dimly lit room reading off the Egyptian Hieroglyphs which brought the mummy (Boris Karloff) back to life. As the eyes slowly opened, they seemed like liquid pools in the midst of a mass of undisturbed dust. As the fingers started to move and the arms slowly dropped, you could see the thin wisps of dust much the same as cigarette smoke, curl up to disintegrate into thin air. I have made several attempts to find out why it has never been re-released only to find that Universal has cut it up to make sequences for other pics such as these new, so called "Mummy" pictures that are more horrible than they are horror.

THE CAT PEOPLE starring Simone Simone:

The picture, as a whole, was pretty fair entertainment but the one scene that really got me was just a very cleverly done camera trick. The cat-woman followed another of the women in the cast down into the basement of a home where there was a dimly lit swimming pool. You could hear a cat "crying" in the background and the camera panned around the walls where the reflected shadows were flickering against them. You could see a thousand indistinct cats but no real one. They all arose in your imagination. The psychology of the scene was prepared to really give you the creeps. It did.

THINGS TO COME with Raymond Massey:

There are two scenes from this which are outstanding in my mind: The first one was where Massey, first arriving in his tiny plane, had landed and detached himself from the rest of the ship and walked to a small rise in the terrain and looked at the city. It gave me the feeling of the arrival of the scientific age which all true science-fictionists visualize in the future. The other scene of course was the firing of the space gun with Massey's speech at the finish.

THE UNINVITED starring Ray Milland:

The sinister ghost in this was the finest portrayal ever put on a screen of materialization of matter. Farciot Edouart deserves a fine hand for his wonderful work on this sequence as the special effects cameraman.

AND FANTASY FILMS —————

KING KONG starring (am I kidding?)

Although I have seen some of the color motion pictures made by Ray Harryhausen (local fan) which I believe are the finest ever filmed, The finest ever to see wide distribution in the prehistoric animal sequences is the battle between Kong and the Tyranosaurus Rex. It was very well done.

FANTASIA by Walt Disney

There are far too many sequences in this film that were terrific for me to select any one sequence as tops. It was terrific - all of it.

PHANTOM OF THE OPERA starring Lon Chaney:

When I saw this picture at the time of its release the sequences in the catacombs when Chaney turns around at the organ after being unmasked, I was definitely frightened. (Being 29 years old now, you can see that I was just a kid when I first saw it.) Later I saw it again (about a year ago) and of course, I was greatly disappointed. I'm sorry that I saw it again as it spoiled a great illusion I had of the sequence. Claude Rains did a very nice job, however, in the modern version. I thought the makeup very good. When we pan the late horror pictures for not showing real horror we must realize that there are censors to contend with.

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GREY starring Hurd Hatfield:

This picture again gives me its greatest kick by a bit of clever work on the part of the cameraman. The scene was the small attic room where Dorian kept his portrait just after he had killed the artist, the hanging lamp which was hit began swinging to and fro, giving a contrasting, changing shadow. This combined with the set expression of the murderer made up a very effective scene.

THE INVISIBLE MAN starring Claude Rains:

This was one of the first attempts to do a good job of showing either the dematerialization or the materialization of the human body. The camera came in close and showed the change without moving away the camera. Although it has been done better since then that scene has always remained with my choicest recollections of films.

